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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service
Southern Region



ALABAMA

SENSITIVE PLANTS OF THE CONECUH NATIONAL FOREST



Sensitive Plants Of The Conecuh National Forest

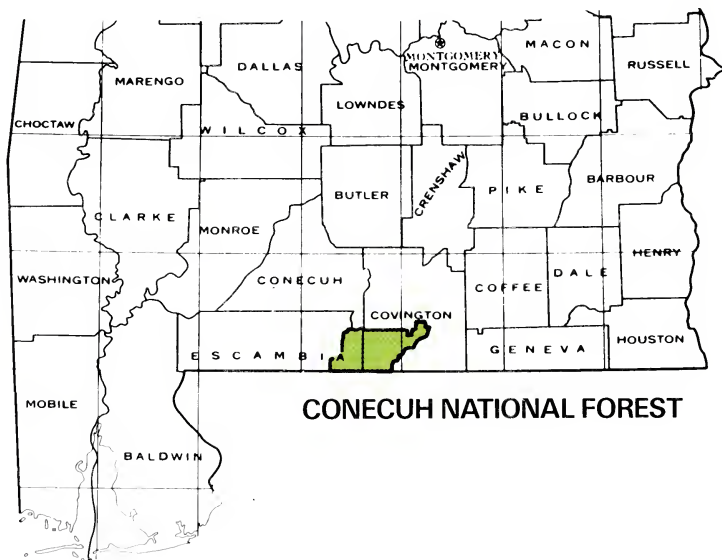
This booklet will help you to identify sensitive plant species that occur on the Conecuh National Forest. Sensitive plants are those plant species identified by the Regional Forester for which population viability is a concern, as evidence by:

- a. significant current or predicted downward trends in population numbers of density.
- b. significant current or predicted downward trends in habitat capability which would reduce the species existing distribution.

The basic information provided in this booklet is the results of an inventory of threatened, endangered and sensitive species contract completed for the Forest Service by Dr. Douglas T. McGinty, Biology Department, Huntingdon College, Montgomery, Ala. 36106.

Pictures were provided by the contractor or otherwise noted in the lower right corner of picture.

Identifying characters include those that distinguish the species listed from a "look-alike" by using family, generic, species and varietal features.



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CATALOGING - PAPER



Name: Thistle Leaved Aster
(*Aster eryngiifolius*)

Family: Sunflower, Aster (Asteraceae)

Flowering Period: May to June

Fruiting Period: May to June

Habitat: Grows in open, moist bogs, lowlands, flatwoods, pine savannas, swamp borders. The specific habitat requirements apparently include good exposure to light, wetness and sandy-peat soil.

Identifying Characters: This is a perennial plant 3-7 dm tall (ca. 1-2 ft.) arising from a stout rhizome. The leaves are narrow and grasslike, becoming reduced on size near the top of the plant. Upper leaves may have short-stiff teeth. The single flowering stalk produces two to six (rarely more) daisy-like flower heads.

County: Covington

District: Conecuh



Name: Rosebud Orchid, Rose Orchid, Spreading Pogonia
(*Cleistes divaricata*)

Family: Orchid (Orchidaceae)

Flowering Period: April to May

Fruiting Period: May to July

Habitat: Open bogs, swamps, wet pine savannas, thin woods and moist meadows. It is intolerant of shade and usually occurs on acid soils.

Identifying Characters: A plant that is smooth, somewhat soft and may grow up to 75 cm (ca. 2.5 ft.) tall. The stem is often whitish and tinted with purple near the base. A single leaf arises at about the middle of the stem and a second leaflike structure (bract) occurs just beneath the single (sometimes two or three) flowers at the top of the stem. When in bloom the nodding, tubular, pink to white flower and dark, ascending sepals make *Cleistes* unmistakable.

County: Covington, Escambia

District: Conecuh



Name: Panhandle Lily
(*Lilium iridollae*)

Family: Lily (Liliaceae)

Flowering Period: July to August

Fruiting Period: August to September

Habitat: Acidic soils of bogs, open wet pinelands, swamps and streamsides.

Identifying Characters: This is an herbaceous, single stemmed, somewhat fleshy plant up to 2 m (ca. 6.5 ft) tall. Lower leaves may be alternate, but most leaves are whorled. A large portion of the uppermost stem may be leafless. Other distinguishing features are: a yellow perianth (a collective term for petals and sepals), brownish-red dots on the perianth parts, green bases on the perianth parts which give the flower a green center, usually a solitary flower and the presence of both bulbs and rhizomes.

County: Covington

District: Conecuh



Name: Water-milfoil, Loose watermilfoil
(*Myriophyllum laxum*)

Family: Water-milfoil (Haloragaceae)

Flowering Period: June to October

Fruiting Period: June to October

Habitat: This species requires shallow, still water of fairly low pH. It occurs in the shade of lakeside trees.

Identifying Characters: This is a free floating aquatic plant with different types of leaves above and below the water surface. Underwater leaves are finely divided into hairlike segments up to 3 cm long and arranged in groups of four or five along the stem. Above water leaves are very tiny (less than 1 mm long) and spoon shaped. Male, female and bisexual flowers occur on reddish stems up to 10 cm (2.5 in.) long. These are usually the only visible portion of the plant. All flowers are minute, but male flowers (with four pale petals less than 1 mm long) are the most conspicuous.

County: Covington

District: Conecuh



Name: White Arum, Spoonflower, Arrow Arum
(*Peltandra sagittaeifolia*)

Family: Arum (Araceae)

Flowering Period: Midsummer

Fruiting Period: Late Summer

Habitat: A plant of bogs, swamps, wet woodlands and stream sides. In the Conecuh Forest, they have been associated with thick beds of sphagnum moss and are found in dense thickets around small, clean streams.

Identifying Characters: This species often occurs in colonies. It has large (25 cm-1 ft.) arrow-shaped leaves which grow from an underground stem. The "flower" consists of an inner cylindrical structure with male and female parts and an outer, white, flared hood called a spathe. This is replaced by a cluster of bright red berries up to 10 mm (.5 in.) in diameter.

County: Escambia, Covington

District: Conecuh



Name: Climbing Heath, Climbing Fetterbush
(*Pieris phillyreifolia*)

Family: Heath (Ericaceae)

Flowering Period: January to March

Fruiting Period: March to August

Habitat: Cypress swamps, depressions and ponds.

Identifying Characters: A woody, evergreen vine or rarely, a low, bushy shrub. If a low shrub it grows to 20 cm (8 in.) high. As a vine, it is found ascending trees (generally *Taxodium ascendens*) by creeping up the bark. This is the only climbing vine in the heath family that occurs in the Southern Region. The flowers are white and urn shaped. The fruit is a spheroidal capsule. Old fruits often persists for many months on the plants. The leaves are leathery and hairless, up to 7 cm (2.5 in.) long.

County: Covington

District: Conecuh



Name: Needle Palm, Porcupine Palm
(*Rhapidophyllum hystrix*)

Family: Palm (Arecaceae)

Flowering Period: May to August

Fruiting Period: December to February

Habitat: This species is a plant of moist, shady sites. In the Conecuh National Forest it is consistently found at the edges of terraces of the flood plain. It seems to not be tolerant of inundation, but requires a seasonal period of considerable wetness.

Identifying Characters: The Needle Palm reaches a height of 1.5 meters (ca. 4 ft.). It can be distinguished from similar species by three characteristics:

1. the blunt toothed apices of the leaves,
2. the silvery-scurfy undersides of the leaves and
3. the presence of long, black spines at the base of the plant.

County: Covington

District: Conecuh



Name: Meadow Beauty
(*Rhexia salicifolia*)

Family: Meadow Beauty (Melastomaceae)

Flowering Period: June to October

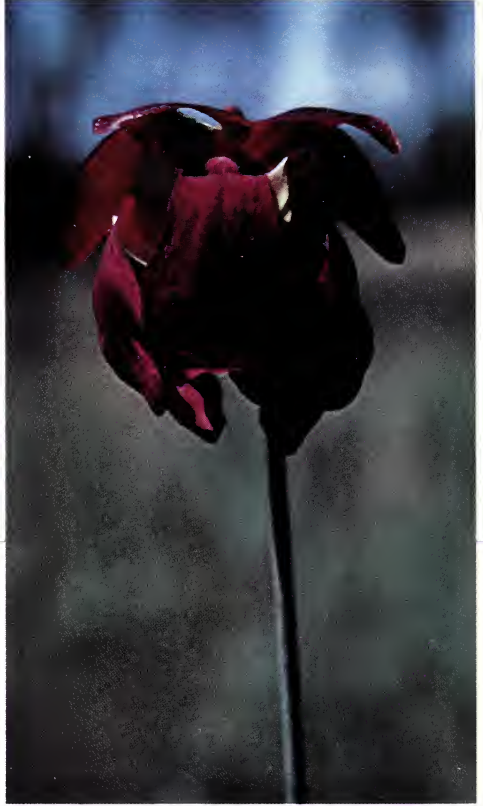
Fruiting Period: June to October

Habitat: Sandy shores of limesink ponds.

Identifying Characters: This is an erect, often branched plant of sandy lakeshores. The flowers are similar to those of other species of *Rhexia* which are common in southern wetlands. This is the only species; however, that is restricted to the sandy shores of limestone ponds. It is also unique in that the leaves are twisted and oriented perpendicular to the ground.

County: Covington

District: Conecuh



Name: Wherry's Pitcher Plant
(*Sarracenia rubra* ssp. *wherryi*)

Family: Pitcher-Plant (Sarraceniaceae)

Flowering Period: April to June

Fruiting Period: June to July

Habitat: This species is apparently limited to low wet savannas and open bogs.

Identifying Characters: This species can be identified by the following traits: it has heavily clumped, upright tubular leaves that are slightly enlarged below the orifice. The hood is slightly to moderately reflexed. There are dark veins on the upper parts of the leaves without patches of white. The flowers are deep maroon and the plants are usually quite small, rarely exceeding 30 cm (1 ft.) in height.

County: Covington

District: Conecuh



Name: Purple Bladderwort
(*Utricularia purpurea*)

Family: Bladderwort (Lentibulariaceae)

Flowering Period: May to September

Fruiting Period: May to September

Habitat: This species is found in the quiet water of ponds, lakes, swamps and shallow pools, often growing among other kinds of aquatic vegetation.

Identifying Characters: This plant is usually found floating, but is occasionally rooted in mud. It has an emergent flower stem 5-9 cm tall (2-4 in.) bearing one to four flowers. The flowers have purple petals with yellow centers. The two side petals are inflated and saclike. The underwater leaves are very finely divided and arranged in whorls. The tip of some leaves give rise to small, hollow bladders.

County: Escambia, Covington

District: Conecuh



Name: Yellow-Eyed Grass
(*Xyris longisepala*)

Family: Yellow-Eyed Grass (Xyridaceae)

Flowering Period: July to September

Fruiting Period: July to September

Habitat: Moist, sandy shores of limestone ponds where it often occurs with *Rhexia salicifolia*. It becomes most abundant during periods of low water when seeds deposited in the water germinate in bare sand.

Identifying Characters: *Xyris* is a very difficult genus. *X. longisepala* is similar to *X. smalliana* a more widespread species of swamps in the Coastal Plain from New Jersey south to south Florida and west to southern Mississippi. However, *X. longisepala* is a smaller plant of consistently different habitats, its spikes are smaller and more often oblong, its flowers have much shorter petals and the seeds are smaller, differently ribbed. Its flowers unfold midday, while those of *X. smalliana* unfold toward evening.

County: Covington

District: Conecuh



Sensitive Plants . . . Part Of Your National Forests

The National Forests are managed under the Multiple Use system which calls for using the various forest resources in the combinations that will benefit the most people. Protecting sensitive plants is part of this management.

We need your help in locating and protecting these beauties of the forest. Please let us know if you see any of the plants described in this booklet.

Civilization sometimes takes ruthless toll of beauty as it moves forward. The world has lost much that is beautiful in the name of progress.

The responsibility of protecting the beauty that is left belongs to all of us, especially on our public lands. Let's help each other to keep natural beauty a prominent part of the National Forest System.